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Erika Mann
New York City
April 4th, 1941

Dearest John,-

the following is a resume of the questions ^{you} get
during the discussions following my lectures:

~~HHH~~ Most of the questions are either Nazi-or-communist~~inspired~~.
It is interesting to note that the training exercised by both the
Nazi-and communist leaders and the simple slogans put at the disposal
of their followers are enabling those followers to be much more
articulate and definite as are our democratic friends.

I.) "Nazi"-questions:

- 1) Isn't it true that the treaty of Versailles created Hitler?
- 2) Isn't it strange that we should attack Hitler all the time while
neglecting Stalin who is the true enemy of western civilisation?
- 3) I certainly don't like Hitler nor any dictatorship,- but isn't it true
that he has unified the Germans, that he got rid of unemployment, and
that the Germans are happy today, because, at least, they are fighting
for an idea?
- 4) If democracy was not completely rotten on the continent,- how do you
explain Hitler's amazing victories,- particularly over France? And if
it was rotten why shouldn't another form of government ~~HHH~~ and of New
European order be given a chance,- especially since obviously nothing can
be done to prevent it from coming anyway?

II

Communist questions:

If England is a true democracy,- ~~HHH HHH~~ how do you explain her accepting
Greece as an ally ,- Greece being a dictatorship,- and her cooperation

with South-Africa/- South-Africa being the birth-place of slavery?

2.) How about Ireland?

3.) (Most persistently asked, of course) How about India?

4.) How about the dayly Worker^s being forbidden in England, - if, - as you say, - there still exists freedom of the press over there?

5.) How about Halifax and Captain Margesson? Why doesn't Churchill finish those tories once and for all, - if he is serious about his cooperation with labour?

6.) How about air-raid-shleter-conditions over there? Isn't it true that the prohlmen has been neglected by the capitalist governement, - in a criminal way and that, - while the rich ones are dining and dancing in the deep-shelter-bars of the Ritz and the Dorchester, the poor have no place to go to?

7.) Are not both, capitalist England and capitalist America thinking of appeasing the fscists^a? If the were not, - why else should they send oil to Franco-Spain and food to Vichy-France? And all sorts of things to Japan?

8.) Isn't it true that this war could have been avoided, - or won speedily, - if England and France hadn't sabotaged the treaty with Sowjet-Russia? And so forth and so on.

III.) "genuine" questions:

Isn't Englang going to repeat "Versailles"?

2.) Aren't we going to be cheated again?

3.) Should we go into this war, unless we know exactly what we would be fighting for? Why are not any war-aims being made known?

4.) Is there going to be a revolution in Germany?

5.) If there is no/ revolution, how do you expect democracy to win without our send ig troups over?

6.) Is'nt ther a chance of Mitler's stopping after the conquest of England and shouldn't we take that chance,- as,by then,we would be fully armed and would be able to defend ourselves far better than we would be at present?

7.) Is there any hope for the consolidation of Europe ~~WHICH~~ ^{considering} the state of mind, it should be ^{because of this state of mind,} minf German youth finds itself in? And, if, ~~WHICH~~ is necessary to "police" Germany one way or antother, will not the reaction be another war,- very soon?

8.) Neither England and America,- in fact no existing country, or democracy are "good" enough to take the lead in any new world-order. ~~WHICH~~ Oughtn't we, first of all, try to improve conditions at home, before assuming the right to tell others what to do?

And so forth and so on.

In my opinion even these "genuine" questions,- that is to say these questions which are honestly concerned with the problemen they are asking about and who do not,- as do the Nazi-and communist-inspired questioners abuse existing ~~problems~~ ^{really} in which they are not interested for the purpose of harming the democratic cause,- well,- even these "genuine" questions, then, are not completely "genuine". That is to say: those who are asking them,- are seeking refuge in all sorts of problems and difficulties ~~WHICH~~ they expect to creep up the day after tomorrow,- because they do not want ^{acute} to face today's ~~WHICH~~ troubles. They are using the difficulties of the day after tomorrow in order to escape today's tasks and they say in so many words,- : "since things are bound to be terribly difficult, after the coming victory of democracy,- why should we try to bring that victory about? Unless you, Miss Mann, are will ng to guarantee us the ideal solution

naturally
were ~~quivering~~ trembling for the lives of their sons,- as there usually was
only one son in each family,- in short, while France's attitude was
easily understood from a psychological, physiological, sociological
and historical viewpoint,- the appaerant ~~unhealthy~~ scepticism and
lack of youthful "guts" in America is kind of bewildering. It does not
seem natural, when young Americans are cheering the courage and heroisme
of young Englishmen,- just as though some physical shortcoming^s made
it impossible for them to be equally courageous and heroic.
With all the explanations at my disposal I have not yet been able to
determine the sources of this phaenomena. Non^e of my explanations seems
to be quite sufficient.

Stop. I must go home to Detroit.

Love as always

yours